



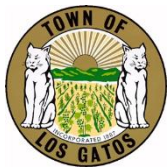
# **Proposed Reusable Bag Ordinance**

**Town of Los Gatos**

**Community Information Meeting—July 25, 2013**

# What are the Reusable Bag Ordinance Rules?

- No more free carryout bags.
- 40% post-consumer recycled content paper bags and durable plastic reusable bags can be purchased for 10 cents.
- Washable cloth or canvas reusable shopping bags are encouraged.
- Protective bags used for produce, meat, prescriptions and greeting cards are allowed.



[www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags](http://www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags)

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# Proposed Ordinance Details

## Exempt Stores & Customers

- Dry Cleaners
- Public Eating Establishments  
*(restaurants, fast food, or any establishment that generates 90% or more revenue from prepared food or drink).*
- Non-profit or charitable organizations
- Customers purchasing food with Women, Infant, Children (WIC) or CalFresh/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Programs

## Categories of Stores Affected

- Grocery Stores
- Liquor Stores
- Pharmacy/Drug Stores
- Hardware Stores
- Electronic Stores
- Bookstores
- Clothing Stores
- “Any commercial establishment that sells perishable or non-perishable goods included but not limited to clothing, food and personal items directly to the customer.” (Exempting restaurants and non-profits)



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# Environmental Impacts

## WHY? Water Quality is Mandated



- The Regional Water Quality Control (RWQC) Board has mandated that cities reduce the amount of litter escaping into waterways by 40% by 2014. It is part of our Municipal Permit.
- One strategy identified by the RWQC is for cities to adopt bag ordinances to prohibit disposal, thin plastic carryout bags from retail stores.
- Ordinances work – San Jose achieved an 89% decrease in bags found in storm drains after the first year of the new law.
- Los Gatos' ordinance is similar to other cities, making it easier for retailers to implement and less confusing for customers no matter where they shop.



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# Outreach Efforts

## Proposed Ordinance

- [www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags](http://www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags)
- Letter to impacted retailers
- Retailer Informational meetings (June 13 & 18, 2013)
- Community informational meeting (July 25, 2013)
- Ordinance Introduction to Town Council (August 19, 2013)

## Post Approved Ordinance

- [www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags](http://www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags)
- Retailer & Resident Toolkit
- Town staff attendance at community events (TBA)
- Press Release
- Newspaper ads in LG Weekly Times



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# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is intent of the proposed ordinance?

- Reduce the number of single use plastic bags in trash loads.
- Reduce the environmental impacts related to single-use plastic carryout bags.
- Deter the use of paper bags.
- Promote the use of reusable bags.

## Why charge a fee for paper bags?

- Emissions associated with single-use paper bag production & transportation is equivalent to 1.9 times the impact on atmospheric acidification as the production and transportation of a single-use plastic bag.
- Emissions from all types of reusable bags are lower than single-use plastic and paper carry-out bags, because reusable bags are used at least one year, or 52 uses.

## What constitutes a recycled paper bag?

- Recycled paper bags made of no old growth fiber and a minimum of 40 percent post-consumer recycled content.
- 100% recyclable with words “reusable” or “recyclable” printed on the outside.

## What constitutes a reusable bag?

- A bag made from cloth or canvas that is machine washable.
- A durable plastic bag that is at least 2.25 mil thick designed and manufactured for multiple shopping reuses.

## Which stores would be affected?

- Any retail establishment selling a good directly to the customer, including but not limited to: **grocery, retail, convenience, pharmacies, farmers markets, clothing, beauty salons, hospital gift shops, video, liquor, pet and hardware stores** in the Town of Los Gatos.

## Which stores would NOT be affected?

- Restaurants and non-profit charitable reuse organizations (thrifts).
- Stores providing a service, like a dry cleaner, would not be affected because they provide a service and not a good.
- A combination service and goods establishment like a beauty salon or a car wash selling goods **IS** affected.



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# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is a non-profit charitable reuse organization?

- Defined as a charitable organization, as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986,.
- A distinct operating unit or division of the charitable organization that reuses and recycles donated goods or materials.
- Receives more than 50% of its revenues from the handling and sale of those donated goods or materials.

## When will the proposed ordinance go into effect?

The proposed ordinance has an implementation timeline of **February 3, 2014\***.

\* Date is tentative, based on Council approval.

## Would a store have to charge a minimum of ten cents per bag?

Stores must charge a minimum of ten cents, it is up to the discretion of the store to charge more.

## Will the bag charge stay at ten cents if an ordinance is passed?

The charge will increase to 25 cents one year after the proposed ordinance is adopted (January 2015).

## Who would keep the ten cent charge?

Retailers would keep the charge to compensate for store outreach efforts, providing paper or thicker plastic reusable bags to their customers and for recordkeeping and staff training.

## Would bags used for meat and produce still be allowed?

Yes, plastic “produce” bags, without handles intended to protect and segregate items may be distributed at no charge.



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# Questions & Comments

- Visit [www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags](http://www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags)
- Contact Town Staff for more information:  
[CGilmore@LosGatosCA.gov](mailto:CGilmore@LosGatosCA.gov) or (408) 354-6888
- Complete a comment card



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